

Example Excerpt From a Beginning of the Year Letter



[Explain the school's approach to teaching math.]

We at [Name of School] are excited to start teaching and learning math! We are using a balanced approach that includes teaching math for deep understanding, engaging in problem-solving, and solidifying skills in carrying out procedures flexibly, accurately, efficiently, and appropriately. Our goal is to ensure every student is given the opportunity to engage in meaningful, rigorous mathematics. With your support, all children will see themselves as mathematical thinkers.



[Explain the top three facts we suggest about today's math.]

The way we teach math today may be different than how you learned it. Here's why:

- 1. Math instruction, like technology, medicine, and more, is always evolving.** Many adults grew up hating math because of the way it was taught. As a result, some adults avoided specific careers that use math explicitly. Research has shown that by changing how we teach math, more people can understand it and grow a love for it.
- 2. We also value understanding more than someone's ability to calculate and get answers quickly because math is not genetic.** This means you will see us praising your child's process, effort, and different strategies instead of their answers and intellect.
- 3. The math your child is learning today is meant to set them up for their future.** This is why you will see your child thinking critically, collaborating, and communicating more in math than ever before.

Remember, everyone is a mathematical thinker. For more on this, here is a short, 3-minute YouTube video you might find helpful on today's math: "The Top 3 Facts Every Parent Needs to Know About Today's Math" (<https://bit.ly/AddingParents>).



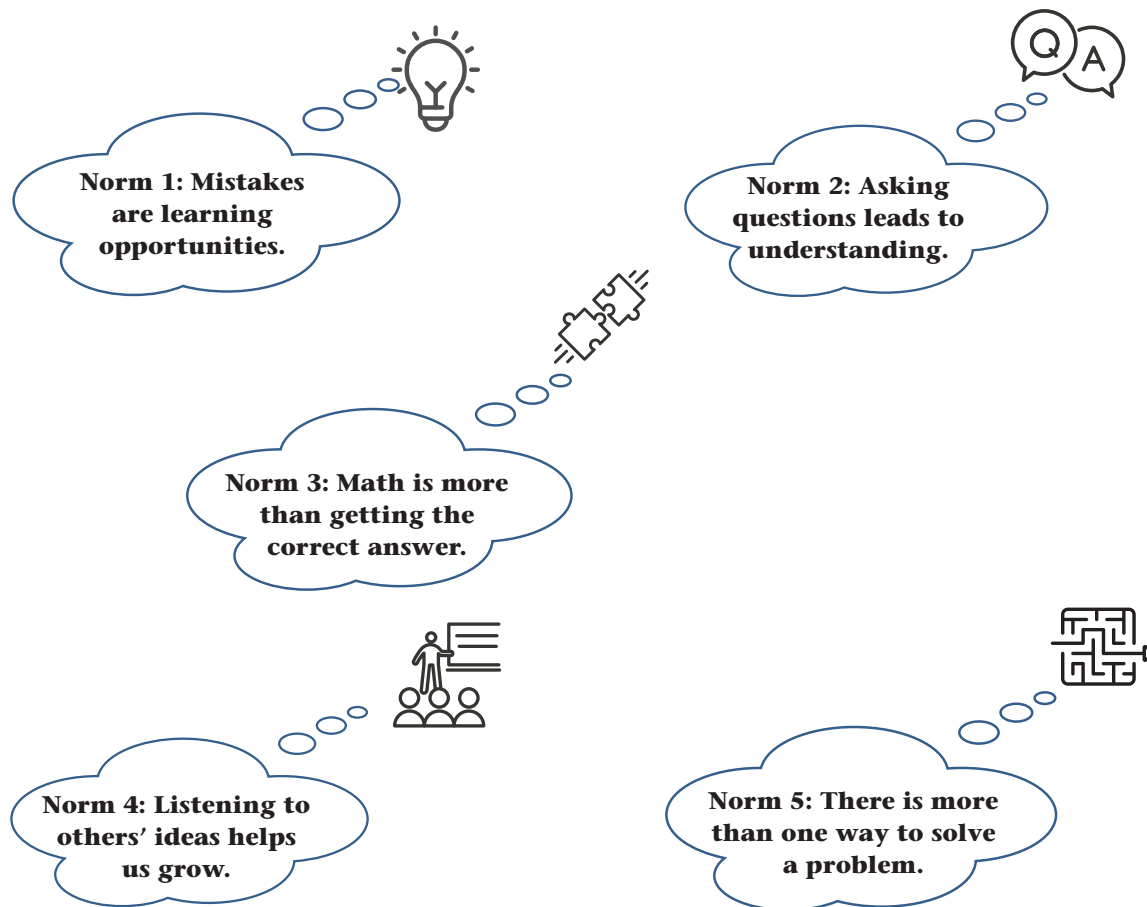
[Introduce math norms for your building and state expectations for parents to use them at home.]

As a school, we have established some essential math norms. Math norms are expectations our school has for all math learners. These norms help us create a math community where we can feel safe asking questions, making mistakes, and using different strategies to solve problems. We ask you to help us build these math norms by also establishing them in your home.

[List your math norms. Including visuals that match the norms can be helpful.]

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[List example parent actions you want.]

While it is our job to teach your children, you also play an important role. We could not do this without you! Below are some actions you can take to support your child's math learning this year. Your child's teacher will reach out with other ways you can support our work.

- Speak positively about math in front of your child. Avoid saying, "I was not/am not good at math" and other statements that might negatively influence your child.
- Accept that your child will learn math differently than how you did. Trust and support the teachers, school, and education field that we are doing what is best for your child.
- Allow your child to struggle. To learn how to problem-solve, struggle is necessary.
- Encourage your child to ask questions and be curious about math.
- Be a learner with your child. Ask them about what they are learning and to teach you their strategies.
- Reinforce the strategies your child learns in school. Reach out to your child's teacher if you don't understand so they can support you.